question himself. But he found one serious difficulty and that was if you or any other honorary registrar of births and deaths defaulted or committed some error, there is no provision of law by which he can inflict punishment upon you, and there the matter rests. The question will be looked into again and if we can possibly without violating the law give effect to it the matter will receive careful consideration and if necessary I shall consider the question of meeting the point raised by the Land Revenue Commissioner and investing him with the power to deal suitably with such Registrars of Births and Deaths and managers.

35. Appointment of an Honorary Magistrate at Mundakayam under the Rubber Thefts Prevention Regulation, IX of 1087.

MR. S. N. URE (*Member, Mundakayam Planters' Association*) said that the subject of the appointment of an Honoray Magistrate for Mundakayam had already been considered by Government and that the Association had put foward the names of Messers. Harley and M'clean to the Commissioner, Devicolam.

With the fall in the price of rubber, there was little incentive to stealing but as prices were rising again the temptation was likely to grow stronger. The Association therefore requested Government to appoint an Honorary Magistrate for the Mundakayam District.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Ure, this question of appointing a Magistrate or a Bench of Honorary Magistrates to deal specifically with offences under the Rubber Thefts Prevention Regulation is one which is at the present moment, and has been for some time past, engaging the attention of Government. There are one or two little difficulties in the way, and one is that a Bench of Magistrate can be created only in accordance with the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code. Now, if you make a Magistrate under the Criminal Procedure Code, he will have no powers to conduct investigations, or make searches, or arrests, under the Rubber Thefts Prevention Regulation because the Criminal Procedure Code does not envisage that particular Regulation. That is one difficulty in the way. Our Law Officers are examining the question with a view to see whether there is some way by which this difficulty can be overcome, and you may expect a decision from the Government within two or three months.

36. Suggestions for the development of agriculture.

Mr. CHACKO JOHN (*Member, Kottayam taluk, Group 1*) said that Travancore was first and foremost an agricultural country, but the economic condition of the people was very poor. Most of them were heavily involved in debts. They could hardly afford to find capital for the development of agriculture by the use of scientific manures or modern implements. Nor had the Agricultural Department succeeded in bringing home to the people the usefulness of scientific manures or the need for adopting modern methods of agriculture. Intensive propaganda work was what was most required in this matter on the part of the department. They should open model farms in all rural areas, where the products flourishing in each locality should be cultivated on scientific

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lines, and the results demonstrated to the public. Lectures should also be delivered from time to time on subjects relating to agriculture. Magic lantern shows could be utilised to supplement the lectures. So also leaflets on agriculture could be distributed freely among the people in the rural areas.

There were indeed several demonstration farms already in the State. But one could not be sure how many of these really served the purpose of demonstrating to the ordinary cultivator the advantages of modern manures and of modern implements. There should be demonstration farms in each taluk, in which all the important crops in the locality should be cultivated. In the Kottayam taluk, for instance, the cultivation of tapioca and sugar-cane was as important as that of paddy. It will be very useful if a demonstration farm was opened in the taluk where all these crops were cultivated.

Side by side with the opening of demonstration farms, arrangements should be made for rendering financial assistance to the cultivators. The present system of issuing agricultural loans did little good to the real tillers of the soil. In order to redeem the indebtedness of the real cultivators, a land mortgage bank should be established with branches all over the State. The bank should issue long term loans at low rates of interest. Elsewhere also land mortgage banks were being suggested as the most effective means of helping the rural cultivator.

In regard to rural reconstruction, another means of improving the condition of the rural population, Government were doing almost nothing. Government had already resolved to establish village panchayats and rules for the purpose had been published in the Gazette. Government should now hasten to bring the scheme into fruition. Panchayats should be established in all villages and they should be entrusted with all works relating to sanitation, public health, medical aid, administration of justice, education and agriculture.

A resolution was not long ago passed in the Legislative Council recommending the appointment of committees for ascertaining the extent of lands available for cultivation in each taluk. This resolution should be given effect to immediately by the organisation of taluk boards.

The member next took up certain provincial needs and referred to the lock in the Pennarthodu and the bund in the Kaipuzha river, which he said were constructed as long ago as the time of the late Mr. Rama Rao, Dewan Peishkar, with a view to preventing salt water getting into the fields in the vicinity. This lock was now in disrepair, whereby serious losses were caused to the cultivators. To serve the purpose of the damaged lock, Government were putting up bunds from year to year. The bunds proved a great obstacle to the numerous boats that passed by the *thodu* every day to Atirampuzha, Ettumanur and other places and to the surrounding paddy fields. The lock should therefore be repaired as soon as possible. There were also many small canals in the locality which were all opened for the convenience of passengers

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and of cultivators. These canals should all be widened and deepened wherever necessary and made useful. Government should also put up bunds in the canals at Kumarakam and other places to the east of the Vembanad back-waters for the protection of the surrounding punja fields from the invasion of salt water.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Chacko John, you have raised seven different propositions today. First, in regard to the popularisation of new kinds of agricultural implements and manures, you will find, as a matter of fact, that after much trial and experimenting, it has been found that the people of Travancore have begun to take very kindly to two kinds of ploughs which are being manufactured at Alwaye, Oachira, Ettumanur, Muvattupuzha and Pallikkal by private smiths with the advice, control and supervision of the officers of the Agricultural Department. These ploughs are becoming very popular, and if you would get one or two as models and have the manufacture of them entrusted to suitable smiths in the Kottayam taluk, I am sure you will get them popularised. That much, I trust, an energetic member of this Assembly, eager to secure the agricultural advancement of the country, will undertake. The two ploughs that I would commend to your attention are the Climax plough and the Meston plough, both light iron ploughs.

In regard to manure, I would say that in a goodly part of Travancore the use of artificial manure has become general. So much so that depots have been opened in several places by such firms as Messrs. Brunner, Mond & Co., Messrs Stanes & Co., Messrs Shaw, Wallace & Co., and others. Further, there is a large number of Government depots as well, and the sale of artificial chemical manures by commission agency has also proved a success, and, as you are aware, Government would afford greater facilities to co-operative societies for the supply of manures throughout the country.

Your next point is the establishment of Land Mortgage Banks. That is a large question which requires very careful investigation and the Registrar of Co-operative Societies is now preparing a memorandum on the subject.

Then you turn to the question of Village Panchayats. As you are aware, draft rules under Section 62 of the Village Panchayat Regulation have been published for public criticism which is now being awaited.

Then you turn to the question of creation of taluk boards and district boards. You have already heard what I had to say on that subject yesterday, to which I have nothing to add.

You want agricultural demonstration farms established in each taluk. Wherever a farm is found to be necessary, it is being established. But we cannot establish farms wholesale throughout the country at a moment's notice. It is a process which must of necessity go forward slowly. As a matter of fact, what the Director of Agriculture finds, and I agree with him, is that the people seem to be so apathetic that

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they want demonstration farms to be brought to their very doors. They think it is too much trouble to go a little way to study the working of a farm. Your mention of Kottayam illustrates the fact that there is no such farm in the Kottayam District. I shall take up that question with the Director of Agriculture and see whether the establishment of one will stimulate the cultivators and consider for what locality and for what particular form of cultivation it will be necessary.

The Assembly adjourned for lunch at 2 P. M. and re-assembled at 3 P. M.

37. Suggestions for the improvement of paddy cultivation in Travancore.

MR. P. K. VELAPPAN NAIR (*Member, Vaikom taluk*) said that it was well-known that Travancore was an agricultural country. The majority of the population were agriculturists. The chief products were paddy, cocoanut, tapioca, pepper, rubber, ginger, and cardamom. Of these, all products except paddy were exported in large quantities to foreign countries. But the paddy produced was not enough even for local consumption.

It was the duty of the Agricultural Department to persuade and stimulate people to improve bad paddy lands. A good portion of Travancore paddy lands were peat lands. The cultivation of these lands had for several reasons become very unprofitable. If Government applied themselves to the improvement of these lands, they could achieve a good deal.

In the first place, *kari* and *punja* lands should not be allowed to lie under water as at present for ten months in the year. Owing to the submergence of the lands in salt water during the hot season, the soil became heated. No acids could thus be formed in the soil which consequently lost its fertility. In order to prevent this evil, permanent bunds should be put up on the banks of rivers and of backwaters. The owners of paddy fields should also be required to maintain the bunds of the fields in good condition. Locks and bunds should also be constructed in the canals and water-ways used for irrigation. This would help to keep off water from the lands which could become dry in the hot season. The cultivators by themselves were helpless in this matter. If they put up bunds, others would cut them open. There was also another difficulty. The right of fishing in some of the channels had been given by Government to contractors. These contractors would not allow private persons to put up bunds in the channels. The Agricultural Department should therefore turn its attention to these matters. If necessary the staff of the department could be strengthened further for this purpose.

Agricultural *samajams* should be established in each pakuthi on the model of co-operative societies. There should be a union of these *samajams* in each taluk. Representatives of the unions should form an agricultural *samajam* under the Director of Agriculture. The

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